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THE NATION

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Frank Talk to the Gullible

The insistent clamor raised by academic "peace" advocates for a softening of U.S. policy in Viet Nam finally got a hard, straight reply. It came from Secretary of State Dean Rusk, normally a man given to the soft language of diplomats. Addressing a Washington meeting of the American Society of International Law, Rusk unsheathed

happens others would believe us about other commitments in other places.

"Surely, we have learned over the past three decades that the acceptance of aggression leads only to a catastrophe. Surely, we have learned that the aggressor must face the consequences of his action and be saved from the frightful miscalculation that brings all to ruin. It is the purpose of law to guide men away from such events, to establish rules of conduct which are

South Korea a permissible use of force.

"Our assistance has been increased because the aggression from the north has been augmented. Our assistance now encompasses the bombing of North Viet Nam. The bombing is designed to interdict, as far as possible, and to inhibit, as far as necessary, continued aggression against the Republic of Viet Nam. When that aggression ceases, collective measures in defense against it will cease."



THE PRESIDENT & HIS NIGHT HAWKS: FROM LEFT, RUSK, McNAMARA & BUNDY
 A distilled Cabinet for focused thinking.

plain talk and slashed away with ringing accuracy and logic at the Johnson Administration's critics.

The Purpose of Law. "I continue to see nonsense about the nature of the struggle in Viet Nam," said Rusk. "Sometimes wonder at the gullibility of educated men and the stubborn refusal of plain facts by men who are supposed to be helping our young to—especially to learn how to think. Let us be clear about what is in the air today in Southeast Asia. We are talking about the vital national interests of the United States in the peace of the world. We are talking about the appearance of aggression—an appetite which upon feeding and which is proved to be insatiable.

Once again we hear expressed the view which cost the men of my generation a terrible price in World War II. We are told that Southeast Asia is far less important than Manchuria and China. We are told that if we prove ourselves on one commitment, that per-

rooted in the reality of experience."

Answering claims that the U.S. is interfering in a foreign civil war, Rusk said that "there is no evidence that the Viet Cong has any significant popular following in South Viet Nam. Most of its reinforcements in recent months have been North Vietnamese from the North Vietnamese army."

Interdict & Inhibit. Rusk went on to say, "Were the insurgency in South Viet Nam truly indigenous and self-sustained, international law would not be involved. But the fact is that it receives vital external support—in organization and direction, in training, in men, in weapons and other supplies. The fact that the demarcation line between North and South Viet Nam was intended to be temporary does not make the assault on South Viet Nam any less of an aggression. The demarcation lines between North and South Korea and between East and West Germany are temporary. But that did not make the North Korean invasion of

The Big Three

Dean Rusk's muscular attack on the opponents of escalation might have astonished those who have always thought of him as a flabby sort, but it came as no surprise at all to Lyndon Johnson. In the past year, Rusk has emerged as one of the three men who serve as the President's most trusted advisers in national security matters—particularly Viet Nam. The others: Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara and Special Presidential Assistant McGeorge Bundy.

The three form a kind of compact Kitchen Cabinet, a distilled version of "ExComm," the outside Executive Committee of the National Security Council that John F. Kennedy set up during 1962's Cuba crisis. Because they often meet with Johnson after dark and because they share his tough views on Viet Nam, they are referred to as the "night hawks" by some Washingtonians. Others simply call them "the Big Three." Said a White House aide of the